Case 8	3:25-cv-01007-SRM-KES Document 1 #:1	Filed 05/12/25 Page 1 of 34 Page ID	
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11	,		
12	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT		
13	CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA		
14	SOUTHERN DIVISION		
15		0.00	
16	ENTREPRENEUR MEDIA, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company,	CASE NO. 8:25-cv-01007	
17	Plaintiff,	Complaint For:	
18	V.	(1) Trademark Infringement	
19	JOHN DOE d/b/a	(Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1114)	
20	ENTERPRENUER.ORG, and DOES 1-9, inclusive,	(2) Unfair Competition/False Designation of Origin (Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a))	
21	Defendants.		
22		(3) Common Law Trademark Infringement	
23		(4) Common Law Unfair Competition	
24		-	
25		DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL	
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# **COMPLAINT NATURE OF ACTION**

- 1. Plaintiff Entrepreneur Media, LLC ("Plaintiff" or "EM") brings this Complaint against John Doe d/b/a enterprenuer.org and Does 1-9 (collectively, "Defendants") for (i) federal trademark infringement, false designation of origin, and unfair competition in violation of the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1114, 1125(a) and (ii) common law trademark infringement and unfair competition under California law.
- 2. By using their confusingly similar ENTERPRENUER mark on identical and/or closely related goods and services, Defendants threaten to usurp EM's hard-earned goodwill. Indeed, Defendants' mark is nothing more than a slight misspelling of EM's ENTREPRENEUR mark, with the (a) "TRE" changed to "TER" and (b) "EUR" changed to "UER." For clarity, EM will refer to Defendants' mark as the "ENTERPRENUER Mark" or the "Infringing Mark" to ensure this subtle spelling change does not go unnoticed.
- 3. EM alleges, with knowledge concerning its own acts and on information and belief as to all other matters (unless otherwise specifically stated), as follows:

### THE PARTIES

- 4. EM is a Delaware limited liability company with its principal place of business at 1651 East 4th Street, #125, Santa Ana, California 92701.
- 5. Defendants are persons or entities responsible in whole, or in part, for the wrongdoing alleged in this Complaint. The true names and capacities of Defendants are unknown to EM, who therefore sues these Defendants by such fictitious names. EM is informed, and therefore believes and alleges, that each of the Defendants participated in, ratified, endorsed, and/or was otherwise involved in the acts complained of, and they have liability for such acts. EM will amend this

- 6. Defendants conduct business throughout the United States, including California and in this District, using the EN<u>TERPRENUER</u> Mark.
- 7. As fully detailed below, Defendants use the EN<u>TER</u>PREN<u>UER</u> Mark in a manner that violates EM's longstanding and strong rights in the ENTREPRENEUR® mark.

### **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

- 8. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1121(a) and 28 U.S.C. § 1338(a), this Court has subject matter jurisdiction over EM's claims for relief for violation of the Lanham Act. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1338(b), this Court has supplemental jurisdiction over EM's state law claims because they are joined with substantial and related claims under the Lanham Act. This Court also has supplemental jurisdiction over EM's state law claims pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a) because all of EM's claims arise out of a common nucleus of operative facts.
- 9. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendants because Defendants have: (a) conducted substantial business in the State of California and this District by advertising, targeting, offering, selling, and providing their goods/services to residents of this District; (b) derived financial benefits from residents of the State of California by doing so; (c) purposefully availed themselves of the privilege of conducting business in the State of California; and (d) sought the protection and benefits of the laws of the State of California. In addition, the causes of action arise from Defendants' activities within and actions targeted at the State of California.
- 10. Moreover, as explained further below, this Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendants because they have: (a) purposefully targeted EM with full knowledge and awareness that EM conducts business in California; and

- (b) caused consumer confusion by using a mark that is confusingly similar to EM's mark.
- 11. Venue in this Court exists under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2), as a substantial part of the events giving rise to EM's claims occurred in this District.

# FACTS COMMON TO ALL CLAIMS FOR RELIEF EM and Its Successful ENTREPRENEUR® Brand

- 12. For over forty years, EM (together with its predecessor companies) has published magazines and books, which provide editorial content and other information, as well as offered products and services related, or of interest, to businesses, business owners, and prospective business owners.
- 13. EM's longstanding marketing and sales efforts have been conducted primarily under the mark ENTREPRENEUR® (the "ENTREPRENEUR Mark").
- 14. EM is the publisher of ENTREPRENEUR® magazine and other publications incorporating the ENTREPRENEUR name in their titles. ENTREPRENEUR® magazine is published six times per year with a current print and digital paid circulation, including both subscriptions and single-copy sales, of more than 400,000 copies in the United States and worldwide and over 3 million magazine readers.
- 15. ENTREPRENEUR® magazine routinely features articles about and interviews with some of the biggest names in the business and entertainment community, as shown here:







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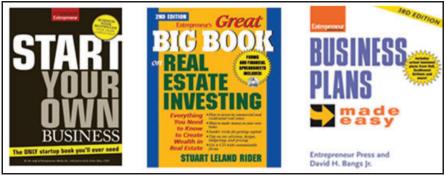
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ENTREPRENEUR® magazine also annually publishes, and has 16. continuously published for over thirty years, the highly anticipated Franchise 500® ranking of America's top franchises using EM's top-secret formula:



17. EM also publishes and distributes in the United States and worldwide over 120 book titles under the ENTREPRENEUR Mark and ENTREPRENEUR PRESS® imprint, and with over 2.5 million books sold, including translations in multiple languages throughout the world:



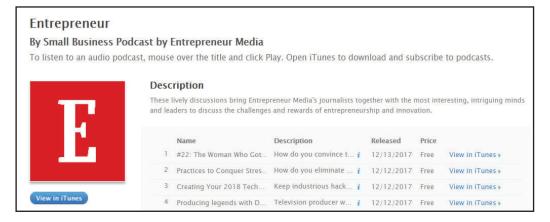
18. EM also conducts seminars, webinars, workshops, and other educational programs geared towards teaching others to successfully start and operate businesses. In one such program, EM has created, and for the last several years offered and sponsored, an exclusive online subscription program under the ENTREPRENEUR LEADERSHIP NETWORK® brand, whereby selected industry experts provide their advice, ideas and other content to help educate EM's millions of website visitors—both existing and potential business owners and entrepreneurs. Over the years, EM has also sponsored events, which have included: (i) the Entrepreneur® Masters & Mentors seminar series sponsored by

Cathay Pacific and Nissan, (ii) *Entrepreneur* \*\* *Magazine's GrowthCon* conference sponsored by Canon USA, and (iii) the *Entrepreneur 360* \*\* A conference sponsored by The Lincoln Motor Company, Canon USA, AXA Financial, and American Airlines.

- 19. In addition to its website at *entrepreneur.com*, which it has owned and operated continuously since 2002, EM also disseminates and markets its content and services through its mobile apps, and its various social media channels on such platforms as Facebook®, YouTube®, Instagram®, and LinkedIn®, and with a total of over 16 million followers.
- 20. The website at *entrepreneur.com* has recently averaged more than 2.9 million unique users and more than 4.6 million page views per month, and with over 6 million unique visitors across all of EM's digital platforms.
  - 21. EM has also launched apps for iPhones/ iPads and Android:



22. EM produces and offers a variety of podcasts, on its website at *entrepreneur.com*, and also distributed under the ENTREPRENEUR Mark on Spotify and Apple Podcast, as well as other outlets:



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23. In addition to the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, EM has also offered its various goods and services under its "E" logo (the "E Logo"), an example of which is shown below:



- 24. EM has used the E Logo to develop, create, distribute, market, advertise, and sell a wide variety of goods and services. EM has used the E Logo since as early as 2013.
- 25. EM's fame and high-quality content and services have resulted in numerous co-branding business relationships with some of the top names in news and business. These co-branding relationships include: (i) annual rankings of top undergraduate and graduate colleges for entrepreneurship by The Princeton Review; (ii) webinars on topics such as leadership, starting and running a business, and marketing and social media, sponsored by such well-known companies as Comcast Business and Oracle NetSuite®; and (iii) videos presented by business leaders, such as the co-founder of Netflix® and the president and owner of In-N-Out Burger. EM's past co-branding relationships have included: (i) contests sponsored by General Motors and Canon USA; (ii) content provided and branded by CNBC, Reuters, NFL Players Association, and Business Insider; and (iii) Great Place to Work® (annual Best Small & Medium Workplaces rankings).
- Most recently, EM has partnered with Yelp® to create AMERICA'S 26. FAVORITE MOM & POP SHOPS®, an annual listing and ranking of 150 of America's most popular independently owned and operated small businesses throughout the U.S. EM has also partnered with Yelp® since 2020 to create a series of podcasts entitled *Behind the Review*, featuring conversations with

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needs and expectations of their customers. In addition, EM has: (i) partnered with Steve Case's Rise of the Rest<sup>TM</sup>, a nationwide program to promote entrepreneurship in start-up ecosystems in middle America; (ii) hosted a contest with Canon USA under the rubric *Project Grow Challenge*, in which businesses were awarded money based on how they proposed to grow their businesses through increased productivity and consumer awareness; and (iii) partnered with Chivas Brothers

business owners and reviewers about how small businesses can best respond to the

- Limited as its exclusive media content partner, in connection with and support of
- Chivas' annual event known as *The Venture*, a worldwide competition to discover, celebrate, and award with investment dollars extraordinary startup businesses
- creating positive social change.
- Through careful cultivation of its various products and services, EM has developed an outstanding reputation as an innovator in the field of business start-ups and strategy and has established an extremely loyal customer following.
- 28. EM has received a tremendous amount of public recognition and acclaim for the products sold and services provided under its ENTREPRENEUR Mark. Through EM's widespread and continuous use of the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, it has acquired extensive goodwill, developed a high degree of distinctiveness, and become famous, well known, and recognized as identifying goods and services that originate from EM.
- 29. The fame and quality of the products and services bearing the ENTREPRENEUR Mark have been widely recognized through industry awards and commendations. For example, ENTREPRENEUR magazine was rated #1 among the top twelve "Most Relevant Business Magazines for Entrepreneurs in 2023" by Altar.io, and was a finalist in two categories in the 2018 Folio Digital Awards for "Best Website Relaunch" and "Best User Experience." Additionally, two of EM's editor-led podcasts recently earned recognition: the "Problem Solvers" podcast series earned the 2018 Digiday Publishing Award for "Best Use

of a Podcast" and the "How Success Happens" podcast series was a finalist in the
2018 Folio Digital Awards. EM has also been honored as a finalist in two
categories in Folio's 2010 Eddie & Ozzie magazine awards, has been named one
of the top performing magazines for four years in "Capell's Circulation Report,"
and has been honored for its content by receipt of the prestigious Maggie award in
2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 from the Western Publishing Association. EM's
website at entrepreneur.com has been awarded "Outstanding Achievement in Web
Development" by the Web Marketing Association, and its networking website
under the ENTREPRENEUR CONNECT Mark was voted the #1 "Top 10 Social
Networks for Entrepreneurs" by Mashable.com. EM has also received multiple
Integrated Marketing Awards from MIN for its magazine and website, including
being selected as an awards finalist in 2015.

30. In addition, both ENTREPRENEUR® magazine and the entrepreneur.com website have been named to BtoB magazine's 2010, 2011, and 2012 lists of the top 50 media outlets for business-to-business advertising. EM's management and staff have also been recognized for their contributions to publishing and the media industry, including such awards and recognitions in 2015 as (i) Folio's designation of an EM staff writer as one of the "Top Women in Media," and (ii) Fast Company's recognition on Twitter of EM's Editor-in-Chief as one of the "25 Smartest Women in Media."

## **EM's Intellectual Property Rights**

31. EM owns, and has obtained United States federal registrations for, the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, as well as a family of related marks incorporating the term ENTREPRENEUR, as follows:

1	TRADEMARK	CLASS: GOODS/SERVICES	REG. NO.
2			REG. DATE
	ENTREPRENEUR	16: Paper goods and printed matter; namely	1,453,968
3		magazines, books, and published reports pertaining to business opportunities	August 25, 1987
4	ENTREPRENEUR	35: Advertising and business services, namely,	2,263,883
5		arranging for the promotion of the goods and services of others by means of a global computer network and	July 27, 1999
_		other computer online services providers; providing	
6		business information for the use of customers in the	
7		field of starting and operating small businesses and	
8		permitting customers to obtain information via a global	
0		computer network and other computer online service providers; and web advertising services, namely,	
9		providing active links to the websites of others	
10	ENTREPRENEUR	35: Arranging and conducting trade show exhibitions in the field of entrepreneurial activities, namely, the	2,502,032 October 30,
11		start-up and operation of small business enterprises	2001
12		41: Educational services, namely, conducting seminars on the development and operation of businesses, and	
13		conducting workshops on computer technology,	
13		telecommunications, marketing, financing options, real	
14	ENTREPRENEUR	estate management, tax planning, and insurance	4.2(0.048
15	ENTREPRENEUR	38: Streaming of video and digital material on the Internet	4,260,948 December 18,
			2012
16	ENTREPRENEUR	9: Downloadable computer software and software for	4,345,424
17		mobile devices for the reproduction, display, and	June 4, 2013
18		distribution of digitized content	
	ENTREPRENEUR	9: Pre-recorded audio and audiovisual recordings of	5,256,907
19		programs concerning strategies and other how-to	August 1,
20		information about starting and successfully operating businesses, successful business owners and other	2017
21		information of interest to business owners and	
22		members of the general public interested in owning and operating a business, in the form of downloadable	
23		recordings 38: Streaming of audiovisual and multimedia content	
		via the internet; transmission and delivery of	
24		audiovisual and multimedia content via the internet;	
25		video-on-demand transmission services; mobile media	
26		services in the nature of electronic transmission, wireless broadcasting and electronic delivery of audio,	
		video and multimedia entertainment content, namely,	
27		text, data, images, audio, video, and audiovisual files	
28		provided via the internet; video broadcasting services over the internet or other communications network,	

1	TRADEMARK	CLASS: GOODS/SERVICES	REG. NO.
2		1 1 4 1 11 4 201 11 11 14 4	REG. DATE
		namely, electronically transmitting video clips; internet	
3		broadcasting services; providing streaming of audio and video in the nature of programs concerning	
4		strategies and other how-to information about starting	
		and successfully operating businesses, successful	
5		business owners and other information of interest to	
		business owners and members of the general public	
6		interested in owning and operating a business, namely,	
7		audio, visual, and audiovisual matter for others via	
		global computer networks; broadcasting and	
8		transmission of radio, and internet programs;	
9		broadcasting of internet programs via radio and	
		television; broadcasting of programs provided over the	
10		internet; streaming audio, video, and audiovisual content, data and information on the Internet,	
11		communications networks and wireless	
11		telecommunications networks; providing video on-	
12		demand transmission of audio, video and audiovisual	
1.2		content, data and information; transmission of audio,	
13		video and audiovisual content, data and information on	
14		the Internet, communications networks and wireless	
		telecommunications networks.	
15		41: Entertainment services, namely, the production,	
16		presentation, distribution and syndication of on-going	
10		television, internet and non-downloadable audio and	
17		audiovisual recordings, all of the aforementioned concerning strategies and other how-to information	
10		about starting and successfully operating businesses,	
18		successful business owners and other information of	
19		interest to business owners and members of the general	
		public interested in owning and operating a business	
20	ENTREPRENEUR	25: Clothing, namely, shirts; fleece pullovers;	4,690,619
21		pullovers; shirts; short-sleeved or long-sleeved t-shirts;	February 24,
		short-sleeved shirts; T-shirts; Headgear, namely, hats,	2015
22		caps.	4 (12 027
23	ENTREPRENEUR	35: Online ordering services featuring printed and	4,612,937
23	BOOKSTORE	electronically downloadable publications, namely,	September 30, 2014
24		books, study guides, concerning advice and information relating to starting and operating a	2014
		business and other topics concerning and of interest to	
25		entrepreneurs, new and existing businesses, and	
26		members of the general public	
	ENTREPRENEUR	16: Paper goods and printed matter, namely, books,	3,470,064
27	PRESS	manuals, work books, study guides, legal and business	July 22, 2008
28		forms, and newsletters concerning advice and	-
۷٥		information relating to the subjects of starting, running,	

1	TRADEMARK	CLASS: GOODS/SERVICES	REG. NO. REG. DATE
2		and operating a business, and individuals who	
3		succeeded in business, which subjects are of interest to entrepreneurs, new and existing businesses, and	
4		members of the general public	2.450.052
5	Fn	16: Paper goods and printed matter, namely, books, manuals, work books, study guides, legal and business	3,470,063 July 22, 2008
6	Entrepreneur	forms, and newsletters concerning advice and	5 dily 22, 2000
	Entrepreneur Press	information relating to the subjects of starting, running	
7		and operating a business, and individuals who succeeded in business, which subjects are of interest to	
8		entrepreneurs, new and existing businesses, and	
9	ENTREPRENEUR'S	members of the general public  9: Downloadable computer software and software for	4,532,577
10	STARTUPS	mobile devices for the reproduction, display,	May 20, 2014
		distribution, and sharing of digitized content;	,
11		downloadable electronic publications, namely, magazines in the fields of business, finance, sales,	
12		marketing, current events, lifestyle issues, and	
13		developments in science and technology	2 20 4 000
	ENTREPRENEUR'S STARTUPS	16: Paper goods and printed matter; namely, magazines pertaining to business opportunities	3,204,899 February 6,
14	STARTOLS	magazines pertaining to business opportunities	2007
15	ENTREPRENEUR	9: Downloadable digital books in the nature of e-	5,854,545
16	VOICES	books, namely, a downloadable series of non-fiction e- books featuring the unique voices of thought leaders,	September 10, 2019
17		topic experts, small business owners and entrepreneurs,	2017
		who share their definitive and unique perspectives on	
18		various hot and trending topics of interest to entrepreneurs, new and existing business owners and	
19		members of the general public, including inspirational	
20		stories and timeless advice	
21		16: Paper goods and printed matter, namely, a series of non-fiction books featuring the unique voices of	
		thought leaders, topic experts, small business owners	
22		and entrepreneurs, who share their definitive and unique perspectives on various hot and trending topics	
23		of interest to entrepreneurs, new and existing business	
24		owners and members of the general public, and	
25		inspirational stories and timeless advice	

32. The above marks are collectively referred to as the "EM Marks." The above registrations are collectively referred to as the "EM Registrations."

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registrations.

- EM's five U.S. registrations for the ENTREPRENEUR Mark 33. (Nos. 1,453,968; 2,263,883; 2,502,032; 4,260,948; 4,345,424; 4,690,619) and several other of the foregoing registrations are also incontestable pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1065, which constitutes conclusive evidence of the registrations' validity, as well as EM's entitlement to the exclusive use of the marks in commerce throughout the United States on the goods and services listed in the
- 34. Further, the EM Registrations constitute prima facie evidence that the EM Marks are valid, and that EM is entitled to the exclusive use of the EM Marks in commerce throughout the United States on the goods and services listed in the registrations.
- 35. EM, and its predecessors in interest, have been and are now engaged in the business of developing, creating, distributing, marketing, advertising, and selling a wide variety of goods and services under the EM Marks, and in particular under the ENTREPRENEUR Mark. In fact, EM has used the ENTREPRENEUR Mark in commerce for over forty years, having first adopted that mark for magazines at least as early as May 2, 1978, which is famous, well-known, and recognized as identifying goods and services that originate from EM.
- Through careful cultivation of its goods and services provided under 36. the EM Marks, and in particular the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, EM has developed an outstanding reputation as an innovator in the field of business start-ups and strategy and has established an extremely loyal customer following. Through EM's widespread and continuous use of its family of EM Marks, these marks have acquired extensive goodwill, developed a high degree of distinctiveness, and become well-known and recognized as identifying goods and services that originate from EM.
- Additionally, EM has developed strong common law trademark rights 37. to the E Logo. Indeed, through EM's widespread and continuous use of its E

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- Logo, the logo has acquired extensive goodwill, developed a high degree of distinctiveness, and become well-known and recognized as identifying goods and services that originate from EM.
- Numerous courts across the country have recognized the strength of the EM Marks, including<sup>1</sup>:
  - i. The U.S. District Court for the Central District of California held that "[t]he extensive advertising and public recognition over the past 25" years have established [the ENTREPRENEUR® Mark] as a strong mark in the industry"; the ENTREPRENEUR® Mark "is a strong distinctive mark, deserving of significant protection"; and the ENTREPRENEUR Mark "has acquired secondary meaning." Entrepreneur Media, Inc. v. Smith, No. 98-3607, 2004 U.S. Dist. Lexis 24078, \*9–10, 13 (C.D. Cal. June 23, 2004).
  - The Ninth Circuit reviewed the District Court's findings and affirmed ii. them on appeal. Entrepreneur Media, Inc. v. Smith, 101 Fed. App'x 212, 215 (9th Cir. 2004).
  - iii. The U.S. District Court for the Central District of California in a later case adopted the holding of the district court in the Smith case, and once again found that "the mark ENTREPRENEUR is strong distinctive mark, deserving of significant protection" and that "EMI's ENTREPRENEUR mark is a strong mark" that was infringed by defendant's ENTREPRENEUR PODCAST mark. See Entrepreneur Media, Inc. v. Eric M. Dye, et al., No. 18-cv-0341-DOC (PLAx), Docket No. 22 (C.D. Cal., Sept. 11, 2018).
  - The U.S. District Court for the Central District of California recently iv. held that "the EMI Marks, including the ENTREPRENEUR® mark,

LATHAM&WATKINS US-DOCS\157956678.2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Some of the cases cited mention "Entrepreneur Media, Inc." or "EMI." These refer to EM, as Entrepreneur Media, Inc. is EM's predecessor in interest.

have acquired extensive goodwill, developed a high degree of distinctiveness, and become famous, well known, and recognized as identifying goods and services that originate from EMI such that they are deserving of strong protection." *See Entrepreneur Media, Inc. v. Alfonso*, No. 8:21-cv-00644-DOC-(JDEx), 2021 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 130502, at \*15 (C.D. Cal. July 12, 2021) (also finding that EM's rights were violated by the ENTREPRENEUR AFFILIATES MASTERY and ENTREPRENEUR AFFILIATES marks).

The U.S. District Court for the Central District of California has also v. twice held that "the ENTREPRENEUR Mark and EMI's related marks have developed a high degree of distinctiveness and become well-known and recognized as identifying goods and services that originate from EMI." Entrepreneur Media, Inc. v. Entrepreneurs Opportunities, LLC, No. 17-cv-01341-JVS-KES, Docket No. 20 (C.D. Cal., Jan. 14, 2018); Entrepreneur Media, Inc. v. The Innovation Initiative, et al, No. 17-cv-2261-JVS-KES, Docket No. 23 (C.D. Cal., August 2, 2018) (finding the same); see also Entrepreneur Media, Inc. v. Darren Casey, No. 18-cv-01058-JLS-AGR, Docket No. 20 (C.D. Cal., December 20, 2018) (recognizing that EM's marks are protectable and have been used for over forty years); Entrepreneur Media, Inc. v. John Doe d/b/a/Entrepreneur Press, No. 19-cv-01706-JLS-JDE, Docket No. 23 (C.D. Cal., October 21, 2020) (recognizing the same). These courts also held that EM's rights were violated by, respectively, the ENTREPRENEUR OPPORTUNITIES mark, the ENTREPRENEUR TV mark, the FIT ENTREPRENEUR MAGAZINE mark, and the ENTREPRENEUR PRESS mark.

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vi.

The U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado held that "the EMI

Marks, and in particular the ENTREPRENEUR® mark, have acquired

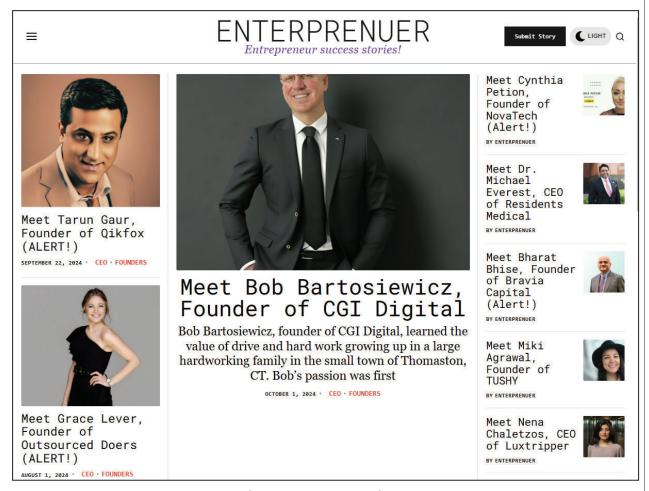
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## **Defendants' Infringing Mark**

39. In a blatant attempt to capitalize on EM's goodwill and its strong rights in the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, Defendants adopted a nearly identical mark with only a slight misspelling and registered the associated misspelled *enterprenuer.org* domain name (underlining added for clarity) to host a website using the ENTERPRENUER Mark, as shown below:



(en<u>ter</u>pren<u>uer</u>.org)

- 40. Under the ENTERPRENUER Mark, Defendants have provided various goods and services, including online articles, blogs, and resources for people interested in starting or building a business.
- 41. Additionally, Defendants offer various levels of paid packages to individuals who are interested in being interviewed and thereafter having a story published based on that interview, as shown below:

1 The packages are listed below. Support our Mission. You can help Enterprenuer.org Reach out. 2 Choose the packages that suit you. 3 One time. 4 No Sorry, 5 Next time, for sure 6 \$0 for you 7 Get published Single link 8 Take times 9 10 True, I support 11 your mission 12 **\$50** for you Get published now 13 Three dofollow backlink Relevant external link 14 Visitor analytics 15 16 Kudos, Essentials 17 I love what you do 18 **\$100** for you 19 · Everything in True Stick to the homepage 20 Stick to the city page · Stick to the State page 21 Badge of honor 22 23

(www.enterprenuer.org/submit-story/)

Defendants have also used an "E" logo, which is an abbreviation for 42. the ENTERPRENUER Mark (the "Infringing E Logo"). The Infringing E Logo bears significant resemblance to EM's E Logo. Specifically, both logos contain a white letter "E" with a black background, giving them the same overall look and feel, as seen below:

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**Infringing E Logo** 

EM's E Logo

- Defendants use the Infringing E Logo on their website to provide the 43. same types of goods and services offered under the ENTERPRENUER Mark.
- Defendants have made their goods and services available to residents 44. of California. Indeed, Defendants offer their goods and services on their website, and any resident in California can access this website.
- Moreover, Defendants publish a substantial number of articles about individuals who reside in California and this District. For example, Defendants published an article on Dr. Sonny Rubin, "a respected pain management specialist and anesthesiologist in Newport Beach, California," as shown below:



specialist in Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine, with training from Saint George's University, USC, and UCLA.

**ENTERPRENUER** 

Start Reading v



(www.enterprenuer.org/ceo/meet-dr-sonny-rubin-orange-county-pain-specialist/)

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Not only are Defendants using the ENTERPRENUER Mark and 46. Infringing E Logo to offer goods and services, but they are also targeting EM and impersonating the company.

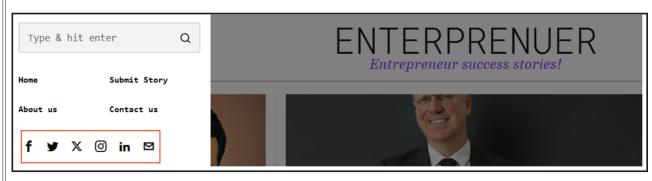
47. For example, Defendants misleadingly listed EM's legitimate domain name (entrepreneur.org) and EM's previous corporate address on their website, and they claimed that EM's address was their "headquarters," as shown below:

# Visit Our Headquarters:

- Entrepreneur.org
- 18061 Fitch, Irvine, California, 92614
- Find us on the map: Link to Google Maps

(www.web.archive.org/web/20240228121034/https://enterprenuer.org/contact-us/)

Additionally, Defendants' website contains links to various social 48. media accounts, including Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, and LinkedIn, and each of these links redirects consumers to EM's legitimate social media accounts, as shown below:



(enterprenuer.org)

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(<u>www.facebook.com/Entrepreneur</u>, accessed by clicking the Facebook icon shown above on <u>enterprenuer</u>.org)



(<u>www.instagram.com/entrepreneur</u>, accessed by clicking the Instagram icon shown above on <u>enterprenuer.org</u>)

- 49. In light of EM's renown, online presence, and long history of providing goods and services under the EM Marks and E Logo, EM is very concerned that consumers will likely be confused and mistakenly believe that Defendants and their goods and/or services are endorsed, approved, or sponsored by, or affiliated, connected, or associated with, EM.
- 50. EM's concern about a likelihood of consumer confusion is not merely hypothetical. **Consumers have already been confused**.

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51. For example, in a recent blog post, Defendants published an article on Dr. Alexander Everest, an individual who, on information and belief, resides in this District:



(www.enterprenuer.org/founders/meet-dr-alexander-everest-founder-of-residents*medical/*)

After this article was published on Defendants' website, Dr. Everest's 52. representative reached out to EM and demanded that this article be immediately removed. Of course, EM did not publish this article, since it was published on Defendants' website, not EM's website. Thus, Dr. Everest and his representative suffered confusion as to the source of this article, which was caused by Defendants' trademark infringement.

My name is Eric Rivas, and I am writing on behalf of Dr. Michael Everest, the rightful Founder and Chairman of Residents Medical. On April 20, 2024, Entrepreneur.com published an article that is factually incorrect: Meet Dr. Alexander Everest, Founder of Residents Medical.

Dr. Alexander Everest is not associated with Residents Medical or is in any position of influence. On your own website, there's an article stating that Dr. Michael Everest is the CEO of Residents Medical.

We need to get the Alexander Everest article taken down by Monday, 5/29/24, by close of business, or we will take legal action. This is a very serious matter.

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As another example of consumer confusion, an individual commented 53. on an article posted on Defendants' website, stating that a "reputed magazine like Entrepreneur should not feature this low-life scammer" (emphasis added):

### COMMENTS



### KanakB

September 23, 2024 at 7:35 pm

A reputed magazine like Entrepreneur should not feature this low-life scammer. My grandpa got scammed for 345\$ in the name of qikbay. There are also many complaints on scammer.info as well. Read below.

I called them and spoke to Timothy Pharris and Alex Hailes, both of whom had strong Indian accents. They attempted to trick me into paying \$265.05. I obtained their IP information and GPS location, and found some personal phone numbers through their systems. @qikbayscam @jinigramscam Suspected scammers:

Tarun Gaur (aka Tarun Parasher): +1 650-308-6363 Kashish Mehra (allegedly handling the scam artists): +91 98107-59699 Imran Khan: +91 99993-79795

GPS location: Method Works Private Limited - 6th or 7th floor, Aykon Tower, Noida, UP 201304, India

(www.enterprenuer.org/founders/meet-tarun-gaur-founder-of-qikfox)

- 54. Once again, EM did not publish the article in question; Defendants did, and this consumer was merely confused as to the source of the article.
- On information and belief, other consumers have been confused by 55. Defendants' unlawful conduct.
- Defendants will thus reap the benefits of EM's reputation and 56. goodwill based on this consumer confusion, to EM's detriment.
- EM attempted to reconcile its concerns with Defendants, including by 57. a letter and various follow-up correspondence. To EM's surprise, after EM sent Defendants a letter to address this matter, Defendants responded, "Do you also own fuckyou.com?" Other than this derogatory response (shown below), Defendants never contacted EM again, and thus refused to cease use of the Infringing Mark.

EXTERNAL EMAIL - Purported sender: Victor Parm <exteam24@gmail.com> emailing from exteam24@gmail.com Please confirm that this is the sender's correct address before replying, clicking a link, or opening an attachment.

Do you also own fuckyou.com?

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LATHAM&WATKINS LLP US-DOCS\157956678.2

58. Given Defendants' actions and continuing use of the Infringing Mark and Infringing E Logo, EM brought this suit to fully litigate and resolve the trademark issues between the parties.

# EM Is Harmed By Defendants' Continuing Infringement & Unlawful Conduct

- 59. Defendants' continued use of the confusingly similar Infringing Mark and Infringing E Logo in commerce violates EM's valuable intellectual property rights in the EM Marks, the E Logo, and EM Registrations, and Defendants' knowing, intentional, willful, and malicious use of its marks is damaging to EM and EM's property.
- 60. Defendants have used the Infringing Mark and Infringing E Logo to unfairly usurp and capitalize on the value and goodwill of the EM Marks, the E Logo, and the EM Registrations, particularly the ENTREPRENEUR Mark. Defendants are aware of EM's strong trademark rights and reputation in the marketplace, but nevertheless, use the Infringing Mark to profit from the goodwill associated with the EM Marks, E Logo, and EM Registrations.
- 61. Defendants have intentionally and knowingly capitalized off of confusion between the EM Marks and E Logo (particularly the ENTREPRENEUR Mark), on the one hand, and the Infringing Mark and Infringing E Logo, on the other hand, including by providing content almost identical to EM's content, as described above.
- 62. Due to Defendants' continuing willful infringement and unlawful conduct, EM is now forced to bring this Complaint to protect its valuable and longstanding intellectual property rights. EM had to retain counsel and incur substantial fees and costs (and it continues to incur those fees and costs) to prosecute this suit and pursue its claims.
- 63. EM's interest in protecting its intellectual property rights and its products and services from consumer confusion outweigh any harm to Defendants.

The public interest is best served by granting EM's requested relief against Defendants.

### FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF

## Federal Trademark Infringement - 15 U.S.C. § 1114

- 64. EM incorporates by reference the factual allegations set forth above.
- 65. EM owns the EM Marks and the EM Registrations. The trademarks reflected in the EM Registrations are strong and distinctive and designate EM as the source of all products and services advertised, marketed, sold, or used in connection with the EM Marks. In particular, the ENTREPRENEUR Mark has been used for over forty years and has been recognized by federal courts as a strong and distinctive mark.
- 66. EM is the senior user of the EM Marks as it began use of those marks in interstate commerce prior to Defendants' first use of the confusingly similar Infringing Mark.
- 67. Defendants do not have authorization, license, or permission from EM to market and sell their products and services under the Infringing Mark, which are confusingly similar to the EM Marks, including the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, and which are used by Defendants with products and services that are identical and/or closely related to the particular products and services associated with the EM Marks, particularly the ENTREPRENEUR Mark.
- 68. Defendants were aware of the EM Marks, particularly the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, as Defendants were on constructive notice based on EM's longstanding federal registrations, as well as on actual notice based on EM's numerous communications with Defendants about this matter. Yet, Defendants continued to use their Infringing Mark. Thus, Defendants' unauthorized use of the confusingly similar Infringing Mark was and is knowing, intentional, and willful.
- 69. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' wrongful conduct, EM has been and will continue to be damaged.

- 72. Defendants' activities have caused and will continue to cause irreparable harm to EM, for which it has no adequate remedy at law, because:
- (i) the EM Marks, and in particular the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, comprise unique and valuable property rights that have no readily determinable market value;
- (ii) Defendants' infringement constitutes interference with EM's goodwill and customer relationships and is harming and will continue to substantially harm
- 12 | EM's reputation as a source of high-quality goods and services; and
  - (iii) Defendants' wrongful conduct, and the damages resulting to EM, are continuing. Accordingly, EM is entitled to injunctive relief pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1116(a).
  - (i) requiring Defendants to account to EM for any and all profits derived from its infringing actions, to be increased in accordance with the applicable provisions of law; and (ii) awarding all damages sustained by EM that were caused by Defendants' conduct.

Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1117(a), EM is entitled to an order:

- 74. Defendants' conduct was and is intentional and without foundation in law, and, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1117(a), EM is therefore entitled to an award of treble damages against Defendants.
- 75. Defendants' acts make this an exceptional case under 15 U.S.C. § 1117(a); thus EM is entitled to an award of attorneys' fees and costs.

# SECOND CLAIM FOR RELIEF

- Federal Unfair Competition/False Designation of Origin 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a)
  - 76. EM incorporates by reference the factual allegations set forth above.

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- 77. The EM Marks and E Logo, and in particular the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, are strong and distinctive and designate EM as the source of all goods and services advertised, marketed, sold, or used in connection with those marks. In addition, by virtue of EM's decades of use of the ENTREPRENEUR Mark in connection with its products and services, and its extensive marketing, advertising, promotion, and sale of its products and services under that mark (as well as the EM Marks and E Logo), the EM Marks the E Logo, including in particular the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, have acquired secondary meaning, whereby the consuming public of this District, the State of California, and the United States associate the EM Marks and E Logo with a single source of products and services.
- 78. EM is the senior user of the EM Marks and E Logo as it began use of those marks in interstate commerce prior to Defendants' first use of the confusingly similar Infringing Mark.
- 79. Defendants were aware of the EM Marks and E Logo, and in particular the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, because Defendants were on constructive notice based on EM's longstanding federal registrations, as well as on actual notice based on EM's numerous communications with Defendants about this matter. Yet, Defendants continued to use their Infringing Mark. Thus, Defendants' unauthorized use of the confusingly similar Infringing Mark was and is knowing, intentional, and willful.
- 80. Through their use of the confusingly similar Infringing Mark,
  Defendants intended to, and did in fact, confuse and mislead consumers into
  believing, and misrepresented and created the false impression, that EM somehow
  authorized, originated, sponsored, approved, licensed, or participated in
  Defendants' use of the confusingly similar Infringing Mark.
- 81. In fact, there is no connection, association, or licensing relationship between EM and Defendants, nor has EM ever authorized, licensed, or given

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permission to Defendants to use the confusingly similar Infringing Mark in any manner.

- 82. Defendants' use of the confusingly similar Infringing Mark will likely cause confusion as to the origin and authenticity of Defendants' website, and related goods and services, and will likely cause others to believe that there is a relationship between Defendants and EM when there is, in fact, not.
- As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' wrongful conduct, 83. EM has been and will continue to be damaged.
- Defendants' actions thus constitute false designation of origin and 84. unfair competition.
- 85. Defendants' activities have caused, and will continue to cause, irreparable harm to EM, for which it has no adequate remedy at law, in that: (i) the EM Marks and E Logo, including the ENTREPRENEUR Mark, comprise unique and valuable property rights that have no readily determinable market value; (ii) Defendants' infringement constitutes interference with EM's goodwill and customer relationships and will substantially harm EM's reputation as a source of high-quality goods and services; and (iii) Defendants' wrongful conduct, and the damages resulting to EM, are continuing. Accordingly, EM is entitled to
- Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §1117(a), EM is entitled to an order: 86. (i) requiring Defendants to account to EM for any and all profits derived from its actions, to be increased in accordance with the applicable provisions of law; and (ii) awarding all damages sustained by EM that were caused by Defendants' conduct.

injunctive relief pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1116(a).

Defendants' conduct was and is intentional and without foundation in 87. law, and pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1117(a), EM is therefore entitled to an award of treble damages against Defendants.

1	88.	Defendants' acts make this an exceptional case under 15 U.S.C.	
2	§ 1117(a);	thus, EM is entitled to an award of attorneys' fees and costs.	
3	THIRD CLAIM FOR RELIEF		
4		Common Law Trademark Infringement	
5	89.	EM incorporates by reference the factual allegations set forth above.	
6	90.	EM has valid and protectable common law rights in the EM Marks	
7	and E Logo	).	
8	91.	EM is the senior user of the EM Marks and E Logo.	
9	92.	Defendants' conduct constitutes infringement of EM's common law	
10	rights in the	e EM Marks and E Logo.	
11	93.	Defendants' use of the confusingly similar Infringing Mark on	
12	unauthorized goods and services is likely to cause confusion as to the origin of		
13	Defendants' goods and services and is likely to cause others to believe that there is		
14	a relationship between Defendants and EM.		
15	94.	Defendants' wrongful acts have permitted and will permit them to	
16	receive sub	stantial profits based on the strength of EM's reputation and the	
17	substantial goodwill it has built up in the EM Marks and E Logo.		
18	95.	As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' wrongful conduct,	
19	9 EM has been and will continue to be damaged.		
20	96.	Unless an injunction is issued enjoining any continuing or future use	
21	of the Infri	nging Mark by Defendants, such continuing or future use is likely to	
22	continue to cause confusion and thereby irreparably damage EM. EM has no		
23	adequate re	emedy at law. Accordingly, EM is entitled to an injunction.	
24		FOURTH CLAIM FOR RELIEF	
25		Common Law Unfair Competition	
26	97.	EM incorporates by reference the factual allegations set forth above.	
27	98.	EM has expended significant time and expense in developing the EM	
28	Marks and	E Logo and the high-quality products and services it markets and sells	

under those marks. The EM Marks and E Logo have been very successful and have developed a substantial reputation and goodwill in the marketplace.

- 99. Through their wrongful conduct, Defendants have misappropriated EM's efforts and are exploiting the EM Marks, the E Logo, and EM's reputation to market and sell their goods and services under the Infringing Mark. These actions constitute unfair competition.
- 100. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' wrongful conduct, EM has been and will continue to be damaged.
- 101. Unless an injunction is issued enjoining Defendants' unfairly competitive conduct, EM will continue to be damaged irreparably. EM has no adequate remedy at law. Accordingly, EM is entitled to an injunction.
- 102. Defendants have acted willfully, intentionally and maliciously, such that EM is entitled to punitive damages.

### **PRAYER**

WHEREFORE, EM prays for the following relief:

- An injunction ordering Defendants, and their officers, directors, A. members, agents, servants, employees, and attorneys, and all other persons acting in concert or participating with them (collectively, the "Enjoined Parties"), who receive actual notice of the injunction order by personal or other service, to:
  - cease all use and never use the ENTERPRENUER Mark, the i. Infringing E Logo, the EM Marks, the E Logo, or any other mark likely to cause confusion with the EM Marks or E Logo (including any misspellings or variations of those Marks) in, on, or with any products or services, or in connection with the advertising, marketing, or other promotion, distribution, offering for sale, or sale, of any products or services, including on websites and social media accounts;

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1	ii.	never use any false designation of origin, false representation,
2		or any false or misleading description of fact, that can, or is
3		likely to, lead the consuming public or individual members
4		thereof, to believe that any products or services produced,
5		offered, promoted, marketed, advertised, provided, sold or
6		otherwise distributed by the Enjoined Parties is in any manner
7		associated or connected with EM, or are licensed, approved, or
8		authorized in any way by EM;
9	iii.	never represent, suggest in any fashion to any third party, or
10		perform any act that may give rise to the belief, that the
11		Enjoined Parties, or any of their products or services, are related
12		to, or authorized or sponsored by, EM;
13	iv.	never register any domain name that contains the
14		EN <u>TER</u> PREN <u>UER</u> Mark, any of the EM Marks (including any
15		misspellings or variations of those Marks), or any domain name
16		confusingly similar to any of the EM Marks;
17	v.	transfer to EM all domain names in the Enjoined Parties'
18		possession, custody, or control that include the words
19		"enterprenuer" or "entrepreneur" (including any misspellings or
20		variations of these words), or that are otherwise confusingly
21		similar to or contain any of the EM Marks, or were used in
22		connection with the ENTERPRENUER Mark including, but not
23		limited to, the www.enterprenuer.org domain name;
24	vi.	cease all use of and never register or attempt to register any
25		social media account that contains the ENTERPRENUER
26		Mark, the Infringing E Logo, any of the EM Marks, the E Logo,
27		or any misspelling or variation of those Marks, or any other
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1		social media account confusingly similar to any of the EM
2		Marks or E Logo;
3	vii.	transfer to EM, disable, or delete any social media account that
4		was used to promote the EN <u>TER</u> PREN <u>UER</u> Mark or Infringing
5		E Logo, including all such accounts in Defendants' possession,
6		custody, or control that include the words "enterprenuer" or
7		"entrepreneur" (including any misspellings or variations of
8		these words), or that are otherwise confusingly similar to or
9		contain any of the EM Marks or E Logo;
10	viii.	never unfairly compete with EM in any manner whatsoever, or
11		engage in any unfair, fraudulent, or deceptive business practices
12		that relate in any way to the production, distribution, marketing,
13		and/or sale of products and services bearing any of the EM
14		Marks, the E Logo, or any other mark likely to cause confusion
15		with the EM Marks or E Logo, including any misspelling or
16		variation of those Marks; and
17	ix.	never apply for or seek to register the ENTERPRENUER Mark,
18		the Infringing E Logo, any of the EM Marks or E Logo, or any
19		other mark likely to cause confusion with the EM Marks or E
20		Logo, including any misspelling or variation of those Marks.
21	B. An ord	ler pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1116(a), directing the Enjoined
22	Parties to file with t	the Court and serve on EM's counsel, within thirty (30) days
23	after service of the	order of injunction, a report in writing under oath setting forth
24	in detail the manner	r and form in which the Enjoined Parties have complied with
25	the injunction.	
26	C. To giv	e practical effect to the Court's injunction, an order that the
27	social networking service or entity (e.g., Facebook) related to any of the social	
28	media accounts sub	ject to this Order must, within fourteen (14) days of receipt of

	#:33
1	the Order, transfer, disable, or otherwise cancel those subject accounts at EM's
2	request if the Enjoined Parties have not already done so.
3	D. To give practical effect to the Court's injunction, an order that the
4	Registry or Registrar for any of the foregoing domain names must, within fourteen
5	(14) days of receipt of the Order, transfer or otherwise assign those subject domain
6	names to EM if the Enjoined Parties have not already done so.
7	E. An order finding that, by the acts complained of above, Defendants
8	have infringed EM's federally-registered trademarks in violation of 15 U.S.C.
9	§ 1114.
10	F. An order finding that, by the acts complained of above, Defendants
11	have created a false designation of origin and false representation of association in
12	violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1125(a).
13	G. An order finding that, by the acts complained of above, Defendants
14	have engaged in common law trademark infringement.
15	H. An order finding that, by the acts complained of above, Defendants
16	have engaged in common law unfair competition.
17	I. An order awarding EM damages as follows:
18	i. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1117(a), EM's actual damages, as well
19	as all of Defendants' profits or gains of any kind from its acts of
20	trademark infringement, false designation of origin, and unfair
21	competition, including a trebling of those damages; and
22	ii. Punitive damages pursuant to California common law.
23	J. An order pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1117(a), finding that this is an
24	exceptional case and awarding EM its reasonable attorneys' fees.
25	K. An order pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1117(a), awarding EM all of its
26	costs, disbursements, and other expenses incurred due to Defendants' unlawful

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conduct.

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An order awarding EM pre-judgment interest.